

## USNORTHCOM Supports Interim Housing for Hurricane Evacuees

### In The News

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#### PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. ?

Along with thousands of active duty military and National Guard troops, U.S. Northern Command has asked several commercial passenger ships to report for duty on the Gulf Coast.



The ships are part of a massive response effort by the Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide relief for victims of Hurricane Katrina's devastating assault on the U.S. Gulf Coast region.

The Ecstasy is one of three ships owned by Carnival Cruise Lines that has been chartered at the direction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide interim housing to victims of Hurricane Katrina. Photo courtesy Carnival Cruise Lines.

At the direction of FEMA, the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command awarded contracts for four ships to provide interim housing to those displaced by the hurricane and possibly also those providing federal assistance in the area. Three of the ships — Sensation, Holiday and Ecstasy — belong to Carnival Cruise Lines of Miami, Fla.; the fourth — MV Scotia Prince — is owned by Scotia Prince Lines, also of Miami.

According to Michael D. Brown, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Principal Federal Official for Hurricane Katrina response and FEMA head, while the cruise ship option is just one of many efforts underway to provide the requisite housing, it is an important one.

"FEMA is handling the Herculean task of coordinating the relocation of many thousands of individuals and families whose lives have been torn apart by Hurricane Katrina," Brown said. "Every available alternative, including creative options for immediate housing, is on the table."

All four ships are under charter for six months, beginning on or before Sept. 10. The ships were immediately removed from commercial service in response to FEMA's urgent need for temporary housing for thousands of hurricane victims.

Beginning today, buses arranged by FEMA will transport hundreds of hurricane victims from Houston's Astrodome to temporary quarters on board Sensation and Ecstasy in the port of Galveston, Texas, where the ships are currently moored. The Holiday, in Mobile, Ala., and the MV Scotia Prince, which will moor at another Gulf Coast port, will also serve as mobile platforms for interim housing.

The Sensation and Ecstasy each accommodate 2,634 passengers; the Holiday carries 1,848, and the MV Scotia Prince has room for 1,000.

As directed by the Secretary of Defense and in accordance with the National Response Plan, U.S. Northern Command is supporting the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The Department of Defense is fully engaged in supporting the massive interagency effort to save lives, reduce suffering and protect the infrastructure of the homeland. For more information on USNORTHCOM involvement in national

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disaster relief efforts, please visit [www.northcom.mil](http://www.northcom.mil).